



70TH ANNIVERSARY OF GUADALCANAL: THE CORPS' 'BAPTISM BY FIRE'



In August 1942, thousands of Marines stormed the beaches of the Solomon Islands to begin the Battle of Guadalcanal. The ensuing six-month campaign ultimately halted the advance of Japanese forces and helped to turn the tide against the Axis Powers during World War II. To recognize the 70th anniversary, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. James F. Amos, participated in a commemoration Aug. 7 hosted by the U.S. Embassy in Suva, Fiji. "It was the first moment that untested Marines met crack Japanese troops in the skies, on the beaches, and deep in the jungle -- and prevailed," he said. "Men on both sides

struggled in the most challenging of human environments and fought for their beliefs, their nations, and their brothers. We honor their sacrifices on this 70th anniversary of the battle by carrying the memories of their trials and victories in our hearts."

[Read More](#)

[Also Read: One Marine Recalls the Historic Battle 70 Years Later](#)

PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Lance Cpl. Nathaniel Miller and Military Working Dog Beano give each other a 'chest bump' before working a training scenario at the Yuma Proving Grounds, Ariz., July 26. The duo was part of a demonstration for some of the Army Test and Evaluation Command's top officers, enlisted and civilian personnel. They demonstrated locating explosives and aggression work amid the sounds of machine-gun fire. *(Photo by Cpl. Aaron Diamant)*

NEWS

NEW LAW PROVIDES HEALTHCARE TO FORMER MARINES, FAMILIES OF CAMP LEJEUNE

A new law, "Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012," was signed by President Barack Obama Aug. 6 at a White House ceremony. The law uses existing administrative mechanisms within the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to provide health benefits for 15 illnesses or conditions affecting veterans and their families who lived or worked at Camp Lejeune, N.C., for at least 30 days during the period from Jan. 1, 1957 to Dec. 31, 1987. "We are pleased that the current legislation addresses certain concerns raised by our Marines, Sailors and families who lived or worked at Camp Lejeune during this time period," said Maj. Gen. James A. Kessler, Commander, Marine Corps Installations Command. "Keeping faith with our Marine Corps family is a priority, and includes the continued welfare of all who live and work aboard Marine Corps Installations."



[Read More](#)

[Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Website](#)

WORLD'S LARGEST MARITIME EXERCISE CONCLUDES



Pouring out of CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters, U.S. Marines and troops from Tonga, Malaysia and Indonesia assaulted a mock village at Kaneohe Bay, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, while Australian soldiers advanced on pop-up targets firing live round mortars. It wasn't international relations gone awry -- but the final event of one of the world's largest multinational maritime training exercises. Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) concluded Aug. 3 and the month-long exercise included more than 25,000

personnel, 200 aircraft, 40 surface ships, 22 nations and six submarines. "This demonstrates exactly what is the strength of the Marine Corps -- our ability to be expeditionary [and] to come from the sea, meaning we don't need to have a relationship [with a country] or an established port," said Col. Nathan Nastase, commander of the 3rd Marine Regiment. "We can project forces ashore that can conduct, frankly, any mission."

[Read More](#)

MARINE'S HIGH-RISK SURGERY EASES CHRONIC PAIN

Staff Sgt. Mark Burleson has been living in chronic pain since December 2011 when a bomb detonated in his hands in Afghanistan, leaving him with severe burns, shattered bones, a brain injury and spinal cord nerve damage. "The pain was ripping our lives apart," said Burleson, who was desperate for any chance to alleviate the pain. On July 26, Burleson underwent a six-hour risky procedure performed by Dr. Allan Belzberg at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. As part of the surgery, Belzberg used a microscope and a tiny electrode to make 140 burns in the damaged nerves dangling from Burleson's spinal cord. "If you get it just right, you get rid of the pain," said Belzberg. "If you're the slightest bit off, you paralyze his leg." The surgery was a success, and Burleson expects to continue to recover at Walter Reed Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., for the next year.



[Read More](#)

CORPS' OSPREY: A BREED APART

Combining the best of a helicopter with the best of an airplane, the Marine Corps' MV-22B Osprey stands in a class all its own. The 'tiltrotor' is the latest advancement in aircraft design and functionality. It can transport either 24 Marines with full combat load or 15,000 pounds of cargo up to 800 miles and



has the ability to refuel mid-flight, infinitely extending the distance it can travel. "What makes the V-22 such a great aircraft is the flexibility of options it gives to a unit commander," said James O'Donnell, public affairs officer for the V-22 program.

"Basically, do you need to get 24 Marines to point 'A,' as soon as possible? Send an

Osprey. Need to deliver some supplies out to a carrier in the middle of the Atlantic? Send an Osprey." The Osprey is slated to replace all Marine Corps CH-46 helicopters by 2019.

[Read More](#)



RESERVE ACTIVATES NEW MAJOR COMMAND



With the traditional uncasing of colors Marine Forces Reserve, Force Headquarters Group was ceremonially activated Aug. 5 at Marine Corps Support Facility New Orleans. Just days after pinning on his first star, Brig. Gen. Paul Lebidine took command of Force Headquarters Group, which brings 3,000 troops in six units under one command and administrative oversight for the 57,000 members of the Corps' Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). The activation comes in the wake of the Corps-wide Force Structure

Review conducted in 2010. As the Marine Corps active duty ranks shrink from 202,000 to 182,000, the IRR, comprised of Marines who are no longer required to report for regular duty but haven't yet fulfilled their contractual obligations, will grow to 75,000, making the new command a vital part of this transitioning process. "I'm confident Force Headquarters Group is going to be in good hands," said Maj. Gen. Tracy Garrett, the outgoing commander who guided the group from concept to activation during the past year.

[Read More](#)

TEACHERS EXPERIENCE RECRUIT TRAINING



In customary fashion, drill instructors (D.I.) greeted a busload of high school teachers,



guidance counselors and administrators from Los Angeles and Sacramento, Calif., school districts at Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) San Diego, Calif., July 24. "Get off the bus!" yelled one D.I. For four days, the educators experienced recruit training firsthand as part of the Marine Corps' Educators Workshop Program, learning about the benefits of enlistment and dispelling misinformation about boot camp.

"Please ask a lot of questions," said Col. Michael Lee, commanding officer of the recruit training regiment on the west coast. "The best thing you can do is gain knowledge and go back and share it with people who do not have it." The Corps hosts Educator Workshops each spring and summer, attracting participants from around the country to come to MCRD San Diego and MCRD Parris Island, S.C.

Read More

[Marine Corps Educators Workshop Website](#)

MARINES TRAIN TO KEEP U.S. CITIZENS SAFE ABROAD

As "America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness," the Corps must always be ready to respond to crises abroad. Marines with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) trained for such an instance by rehearsing a non-combat evacuation operation (NEO) July 24 at Camp Pendleton, Calif. "This is a mission that requires every element of the Marine Air Ground Task Force. It is a huge staff planning effort between the elements," said 1st Lt. Jeffrey Pioszak, of Combat Logistics Battalion 15. During a NEO, the MEU's forward command element works with the embassy and State Department to evacuate American citizens. This is the third time the 15th MEU has completed NEO training. "This is probably the most likely mission the MEU will be sent on when it deploys," Pioszak said. "My Marines have become comfortable with the operation." The 15th MEU deploys this fall with the Peleliu Amphibious Ready Group.



Read More

SEMPER RIDE BRINGS SKILLS COURSE TO FORT LEONARD WOOD

Fort Leonard Wood's Marines had the unique opportunity to ride side-by-side with some of the most renowned professional motorcycle racers in the world July 21 and 22. Jason Pridmore's Skills and Techniques for Advanced Riding (STAR) Motorcycle School was on post to help the Marines become more proficient and more confident riders. "I teach real life situations at speeds that can be related to the street. I teach them how to gain control and see how to control their motorcycles," said Pridmore, STAR Motorcycle School owner. Semper Ride, which was created in response to the increasing number of motorcycle fatalities and accidents by Marines, helped bring the STAR Motorcycle School to Fort Leonard Wood. Semper Ride. The Corps has seen a 48-percent decrease in fatalities in the last three years.

[Read More](#)

[Semper Ride Facebook Page](#)



YUMA SCHOOL DISTRICT RECEIVES \$1.2 MILLION TO HELP MILITARY CHILDREN



To help military children transition to public schools, the Department of Defense (DoD) Education Activity Grant Program awarded a \$1.2 million grant to Yuma School District One in Yuma, Ariz., just in time for the new school year. The funds will be distributed across seven elementary schools to enhance the classroom experience, as well as hire two full-time counselors to serve the unique needs of

Yuma School District One

Ground. "We are grateful for the ability to better serve the children of those who serve us," said Dr. Darwin Stiffler, Superintendent of Yuma School District One. The DoD Education Activity Grant Program, a partnership between the DoD and the Department of Education, has awarded \$195 million in grants to more than 160 military-connected public schools nationwide since 2008.

[Read More](#)

military children. Thirteen percent of the district's students are the children of active duty service members stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma and Army Yuma Proving

DEVIL PUPS GRADUATES 50,000TH PARTICIPANT

In 1953, after learning of a group of teenagers that had burned an American flag, Col. (Ret.) Alexander Duncan Shaw founded the Devil Pups program to foster patriotism among teenage boys and girls. So, it was only fitting that the 50,000th Devil Pup to graduate July 28 was 15-year-old Benjamin Hulbert, the grandson of the Devil Pups' founder. "Ever since I was 8 years old, I've always had that urge to be out on the parade deck and become a Devil Pup," said the younger Hulbert. "My grandfather started this program because he wanted the teenagers of our country to have a more profound pride in the country they live in." Today, Devil Pups is a 10-day citizenship and physical development program and consists of physical conditioning exercises, first aid instruction and leadership classes. The annual summer program is open to all boys and girls ages 14-17 from Arizona, California and Nevada.

[Read More](#)

[Devil Pups Website](#)



TRANSITION

LATEST STATISTICS OFFER PROMISING SIGN FOR VETS' JOB PROSPECTS



For the sixth month in a row, veteran unemployment rates improved despite a slight increase in overall unemployment nationwide. A combination of increased private and public sector interest in hiring veterans along with an overall increase in jobs is credited for the uptick of employment for veterans. According to the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate for veterans who entered service after 9/11 fell to 8.9 percent in July, down from 9.5 percent in June. With the veteran unemployment rate now less than one percent above the national average, the federal government plans to continue its push to expand opportunities for former service members.

[Read More](#)

FREE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CLASSES FOR WOUNDED WARRIORS AT CAMP LEJEUNE

The Wounded Warrior Project (WWP) recently teamed up with Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., to provide free information technology (IT) classes for wounded warriors, retirees and their dependents, as well as service members who are within a year of leaving active service. "Our goal is to develop new career skills with real world potential through focused instruction," said Richard Santiago, instructor and independent contractor with the WWP. Working in the IT field is particularly appealing to service members



who may need to find a new skill set after returning to civilian life, as it is one of the quickest growing career fields. The training consists of four introductory courses including: computer technology, computer repair, networking and security. For more information, call Richard Santiago at (910) 450-6767 or visit the John A. Lejeune Education Center.

[Read More](#)

SEMPER FI

BIRTHPLACE OF MARINE AVIATION CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF FLYING LEATHERNECKS



The Marines landed in Marblehead, Mass., Aug. 2 to celebrate the centennial of Marine Corps aviation in the town where a Marine first took flight. On Aug. 20, 1912, Marine Lt. Alfred Cunningham came to Marblehead in search of a plane. After a few flying lessons, he flew one of the local Starling Burgess Aircraft factory airplanes, becoming the first Marine to take to the sky. To honor its place in Marine Corps history, Marblehead hosted a parade and the Marine Corps flew in four helicopters. Don Humphries, a Marine

veteran of World War II, organized the festivities. "One hundred years of Marine aviation," he said, "That's kind of a big thing."

[Read More](#)

[Marine Aviation Centennial Website](#)

